

A REVERSED ELOPEMENT

By GEORGE HIBBARD

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As if floating through the still air from some gray tower, the hour of five was sounding from the cathedral chimes of the big clock on the stairs; but already, on the short December day, the darkness had fallen. All the people staying in the big country house were gathered in the hall, where the fire burned riotously on the hearth. The oldest granddaughter sat beside the tea-table, and about her, on the arms of chairs, on window ledges and even on the floor, loitered, lurked and reclined the rest of the party.

"But I have told you so often," said the nice old lady, as she glanced at the group before her.

"And it was so long ago," she urged, "I don't care," said the youngest granddaughter, who was sitting almost at her feet; "I love those dear old times, when everything was so picturesque and romantic.

"Yes," said the nice old lady, thoughtfully. "I did elope." Then she



"We Are Going to Be Married at Once."

laughed. "It was a curious elopement. I don't believe there was ever one quite like it before or that there has been since. A reversed elopement. That is what I call it, my dear."

"Tell us," urged one of the young men, earnestly.

"Well," began grandmother, "when I told my papa of my engagement he was very angry."

"Engaged!" he cried, angrily. "Married! Never!"

"Of course," I answered, dutifully. "I should not think of doing it without your consent."

"Then this marriage will never take place."

"I smiled at him.

"How can it?" he asked, defiantly.

"Because you will consent, because I'll make you," I answered, confidently.

"You'll see this time," he replied, with conviction.

"You'll see," I answered, just as confidently.

"You promise," he said, "that you will not marry this man without my approval?"

"Yes," I answered, promptly.

"He nodded in a way that I did not understand."

"Alec and I had arranged that the next morning he should make the formal request for my hand. You may imagine my surprise when a note, addressed in papa's handwriting, was given to me as I came downstairs."

"My dear," the note ran, "I find that I am unexpectedly compelled to go to town, and take the next steamer sailing. You need not feel the least anxiety because of my sudden departure, and you must remember your promise. Lovingly, Your Father."

"Oh, the dear old fox! Oh, the darling coward!" I exclaimed. But I was not at all pleased with him then for running away.

"Indeed I was very angry. I saw just how he had caught me, for he knew, of course, that I wouldn't break a promise when once I had given it. He knew that I could twist him round my finger if I could reach him. Now he had slipped out of my hands altogether. Oh, I was furious! When Alec came down, I laid the case before him in indignant tones.

"Of course, we can wait," I concluded, doubtfully.

"Not at all," he said, in a tone that made me jump. "We are going to be married at once."

"But my promise," I gasped.

He frowned.

"Of course, you must keep it."

I nodded.

"You're sure that you can make your father give in, if you can talk to him?"

"Absolutely."

"Then we'll find him, and you'll make him consent."

"But he's gone!" I cried. "He's going to sail to-day."

"He's only been gone a few minutes," Alec replied. "We can catch him at the station. The train may be a little late, for it is often late. There's an automobile all ready at the door—"

"Oh, one of those dear, rumbling bumbling old automobiles!" interrupted one of the grandchildren, clasping her hands, ecstatically.

"We reached the station platform just in time to see the train disappear

ing down the tracks, and out of sight round a curve. We stood there, indignant and helpless. Alec was the first to recover himself.

"When is the next train?" he demanded of the station man.

"Not till 12:45," answered the man.

"I must be in town before that," answered Alec.

"The trolley'll take you almost as soon as the train," the station man answered.

"As the man spoke we heard the song of a trolley car. In a moment the car was in sight up the road. Alec took my hand, and we ran. It was an elopement. Breathless, we reached a point where we could signal the trolley to stop.

"Well, we finally reached Brooklyn, crossed on the ferry and arrived on the dock just in time to see the 'Erthania,' on which father was, steaming out of the harbor.

"We stood there looking at each other, when suddenly a voice cried: 'Hello! almost at my elbow.'

"In a moment Alec's hand was being wrung by a man whom I had never seen.

"'Glad to meet you, Charton, old man!' Alec cried. Then he quickly told him our story.

"'I've got the "Velox" at the next pier,' Mr. Rogers said. 'She's all steam up. I was just off to see a yacht race. Having a race of our own will be better than watching one. She's the fastest thing afloat. We'll catch the 'Erthania.' Come!'

"How we rushed through the little waves! But she didn't go fast enough for me. And Alec walked up and down more and more restlessly as the time went on. We were under way and off from the bridge in no time, and before I knew it we were far down the harbor. The crew had discovered at once that something unusual was going on, and every man was on deck or in the rigging. I saw Mr. Rogers' face grow longer, and I understood that he was losing hope. He held constant consultation with his captain, who constantly shook his head.

"'I say,' said Mr. Rogers, suddenly wheeling round on us, 'all you want to do is to get a word with the old gentleman?'

"'If I could only speak with papa a few words I am sure I would be all right,' I answered, fervidly.

"'Well,' said Mr. Rogers, 'we've the wireless telegraph. We might reach him that way.'

"Of course I had heard of wireless telegraphy, which was just beginning then, but I didn't understand it; and, like great many others, in my heart I didn't really believe in it.

"I stood in the doorway of the cabin. I had not the slightest confidence in what they were trying to do. It all seemed to me to be too wonderful to be true. I waited unbelievably while they ticked away into space."

"That wonderful?" again interrupted the young granddaughter. "Oh, poor, dear, unsophisticated granny! Did you really think telegraphing from one ship to another not 20 miles apart was wonderful?"

"We did think it wonderful," her grandmother replied. "Suddenly I heard the instruments begin to tick-tack. There was a shout.

"It's our signal," exclaimed Mr. Rogers.

"They wish to know what we want," the operator reported.

"Say that Mr. Manton Lloyd is on board the 'Erthania,' and that his daughter—no, some one on important business wishes to communicate with him."

"The instruments clacked busily. 'Mr. Lloyd is there, and asks what is wanted of him.'

"Alec called me."

"Your father is here," he said, solemnly, though we were just out of the harbor, with no sign of papa in sight of course. "What can you say to him now to make him change his mind?"

"Say, I began, nervously and all in a jumble, 'I want my promise back. That Alec Forbes and I have eloped, and that I am firm in my determination. That I will not yield, and that he must in the end, and had better give in now—'

"Wait!" interrupted the operator. "They are asking something. They wish to learn the gentleman's name."

"Mr. Forbes, Mr. Algernon Forbes," I replied in surprise.

"Tell him—I began again.

"The operator held up his hand.

"They are sending a message," he said.

"This is the message we received: 'Why didn't you let me know? I thought that it was the other man. You made everybody think so. Of course, Forbes is all right.'

"Oh!" I gasped. "He didn't see that it was you all the time!"

"I don't very well see how he could," Alec answered, crossly; "I didn't."

"And I never thought to tell him," I moaned, "for I never thought of anyone but you for an instant, and I had nothing but you in my mind."

"And he has sailed for Europe to escape," Alec continued, grimly.

"So he has," I replied, blankly. "Poor papa! And yet it's funny—I turned to the operator. 'But please tell him now that I am very sorry.'

"There is a message," the man announced, and he wrote it out slowly, as the instrument ticked on.

"It was the message: 'Think I have got the worst of it. I'll be back with a wedding present. Bless you, my children, bless you.'

"And that was the end of my elopement," continued the nice old lady. "Mr. Rogers took us directly back to the city, and Alec and I were married at once with him for best man."

"Those funny old times!" mused the youngest granddaughter. "How different they were!"

AMERICAN HORSES TO COMPETE AGAINST WORLD

First International Show to Be Held in London Next Month.

The American horse will be pitted against the best stock of the world at the international horse show to be held in London, beginning June 7.

Alfred G. Vanderbilt, E. T. Stotesbury and Clarence Mackay are prominent among wealthy Americans who have shipped the pick of their show steeds to Johnny Bull's realm, and will seek to wrest prizes from the magnificent animals that will be exhibited there from all parts of the world.

The international cup for the best single harness horse is worth £100; and so is the international cup for the best pair, any age or height, while the English Hackney Horse society will give one for the second best. Some of the special classes will be the exhibition for cabs and turnouts, including hansom, four wheelers, coster ponies and donkeys; for trade turnouts, and for draft horses.

The horses that will battle for the equine honor of the United States at this world's congress will include the very best that can be found on this side of the big pond. Mr. Alfred G. Vanderbilt has his horses at Red Hill Farm, Edgeware, near London.

The terms of the competition are most liberal. No nation is barred. The world is welcomed. To secure absolute fairness of awards, the judges will include expert horsemen from England, the United States and the continent.

The unique show to be held at the Olympia will give this long sought chance.

King Edward and Queen Alexandra will head the list of notables who will be present for the opening ceremonies. Americans who have been doing the continent are turning toward London, and a great part of Uncle Sam's wealth and social distinction will gather around the tan bark ring to cheer American champion horses.

Nearly all of the prominent boxholders at the Newport, Madison Square Garden and Chicago shows have taken boxes.

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The program will be a composite one. There will be judging and exhibition.

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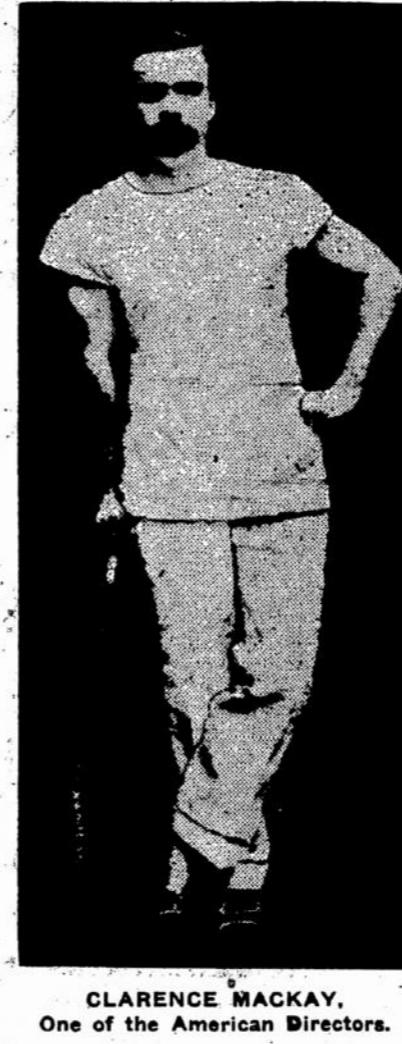
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The French, Germans, Belgians and English are determined not to let Americans get away with the honors, but judges who have inspected the entries from Uncle Sam's realm are confident of a victory.



CLARENCE MACKAY,
One of the American Directors.

All About Breath.